

Michigar

# Aviation manufacturer to add 100 jobs, invest \$14.5M in West Michigan facility



Johnson Technology, shown here with its current facility in Norton Shores, is expanding to a third building in Muskegon County. (Joel Bissell | MLive.com) (Joel Bissell | MLive.com)

By **Justine McGuire** | [justine\\_mcguire@mlive.com](mailto:justine_mcguire@mlive.com)



**Follow on Twitter**

on September 14, 2016 at 2:09 PM, updated September 14, 2016 at 5:28 PM

**Stay connected to MLive.com**



NORTON SHORES, MI -- Johnson Technology will add 100 jobs and invest \$14.5 million in a third Muskegon-area aviation engine manufacturing facility.

The military and aviation engine component manufacturer employs nearly 700 people in Michigan now. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of GE Aviation since it was acquired in 1997.

The company plans to convert a warehouse into a manufacturing plant at 6120 Norton Center Drive in Norton Shores. It should be up and running by Jan. 1, 2017, said Curtis Evans, human resources lead at Johnson Technology.

Johnson's two existing facilities are at capacity, and growth is anticipated in new and existing engine programs.

The new facility will produce components for GE Aviation's new Leap engine, Evans said. There's a backlog of 10,000 engines right now.

The Leap engine will be used in the Boeing 737 MAX, Airbus A320 neo and Comac C919, a Chinese aircraft, he said.

The investment of \$14.5 million will include building improvements, equipment and machinery, according to an MEDC memo.

For the project, the company will receive an \$800,000 performance-based grant from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and property tax abatement from the city of Norton Shores.

"The MEDC made the process simple and streamlined from start to finish and helped us get approval to put the work and the jobs in Muskegon," said Kevin Prindable, plant leader, in a release.

Under the terms of the MEDC grant, the company has until April 1, 2020, to add 100 employees to the about 700 it has now.

Hiring has already begun, Evans said. Jobs are in production, supervision, tool making and maintenance. Production operators start at \$12.15 an hour, and other positions go up from there.

Michigan was chosen for expansion over sites in Kentucky, Ohio, South Carolina and Alabama.

"We've got a good operation here already," Evans said of why Norton Shores was a good choice for expansion. "We're very productive and efficient. West Michigan is also known for manufacturing, and we thought we would be able to attract good employees."

The company's headquarters are at 2034 Latimer Drive in the city of Muskegon. Its second facility is at 6060 Norton Center Drive, adjacent to the new facility, in Norton Shores.

"Michigan leads the nation in creating manufacturing jobs, and these new expansions will keep us moving in the right direction," MEDC CEO Steve Arwood said in a release. "Today's investments will all lead to greater economic opportunities for Michigan residents, drive future business investment and create more and better jobs."

The city of Norton Shores will consider a 12-year, 50 percent property tax abatement on \$4.5 million worth of land and building improvements, said Mark Meyers, city of Norton Shores administrator.

A public hearing will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 20, at the Norton Shores Branch library, 205 Seminole Road.

The city would yield about \$12,000 in additional tax revenue each year during the abatement, while also giving up the same amount through the abatement, Meyers said. Between all taxing units, about \$68,000 in new taxes will be collected.

"GE Aviation is one of our largest manufacturing employers, and one of the fastest growing employers in Norton Shores," Meyers said. "We're pleased to be able to assist them in expansion."

Job applications are available at [ge.com/careers](http://ge.com/careers).

Registration on or use of this site constitutes acceptance of our **User Agreement** and **Privacy Policy**

© 2016 MLive Media Group. All rights reserved (**About Us**).

The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of MLive Media Group.

**Community Rules** apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site.

[▶ Ad Choices](#)